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## **AUGURIES**



# AUGURIES

BY  
LAURENCE BINYON

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## A PRELUDE AT EVENING

My spirit was like the lonely air  
    Before night,  
Like hovering cloud that 's melted there  
    In the late light,  
When slow the vast earth-shadows reach  
    To the last flush,  
And the wandering Silences have each  
    Their own hush.

Did the green grass about me glimmer,  
    Or trees tower?  
Not softer to my sense, nor dimmer,  
    The obscure power  
Of all the world's wide trouble, fought  
    In the heart's recess :  
My heart was solitude, my thought  
    Emptiness.

## AUGURIES

But through my spirit that seemed, unfilled,  
    Alone to float,  
A sudden dewy sweetness thrilled;  
    A low note!  
And then a loud note, rippling full  
    To a still pause:  
The liquid silence was a pool  
    That a breeze flaws.

It throbbed again, how lonely clear!  
    A song that seemed  
Sprung beyond memory or fear,  
    A voice dreamed  
In a land that no man ever found;  
    And who knows  
What shook those lingering drops of sound  
    At the rich close?

Ah, where were you, passion and grief  
    Of the world's wrong?  
What had you to do with a trembling leaf  
    And a bird's song,

## AUGURIES

And spaces calm with coming of night,  
And the fresh gloom  
Of shadowy trees, and smelt delight  
Of hidden bloom ?

Yet O, in me that song had part  
Because of you !  
It drank of the very blood of the heart  
It quivered through  
Because of the tears of joy, and the cost  
Of a joy's breath,  
Measureless thoughts of a dearness lost,  
Hope, and death.

Strangeness of longing, beauty, pain !  
I was aware  
Of all your secret, soft as rain,  
In the dim air.  
For Life it was that sang aloud  
To the lone dew,  
Brave in the night and sweet in the cloud :  
My heart knew.

## MALHAM COVE

### I

THERE is threat in the wind, and a murmur  
of water that swells  
Swift in the hollow : about me  
a shadow is thrown ;  
For above is no valley sequestered  
in shy, green dells,  
But abrupt, sky-closing, a wall  
and a vastness of stone.  
Did the rock split asunder with ages ?  
or suddenly smote  
The hand of a God on the mountain ?  
for under the face  
Of the imminent height, at the humid  
and cold rock-base,  
From out of the dungeoned recesses,  
the cavernous throat,



## AUGURIES

Disimprisoned there bursts, not a rill,  
not a trickle of spray,  
But broad in its gushing and full  
and sweeping apace  
A river arisen that dances  
in laughter away.

## AUGURIES

### II

Built aloof ; unscaleable ;  
    towering stark  
To the fugitive cloud and the blue,  
    O Soul of the Rock !  
Silent, remote as the moon,  
    that will'st not to hark  
To the cry of the lamb on the precipice  
    lost from the flock ;  
If thou suffer the pine in thy cranny  
    that dizzily clings  
Small-seen as a fern, or a thicket  
    of obstinate thorn,  
'Tis disdain that neglects them, O rather  
    a scorning of scorn,  
Unheedful of them as of those  
    irresistible springs

## AUGURIES

Gushing out from beneath thee, unheard  
as the cry of the bird

That skims from the shadow and hovers  
a flashing of wings

Mid the flush and the greening of April.—  
Thou standest unstirred,

## AUGURIES

### III

A desert uplifted, a desert  
    where bones rot and bleach,  
A barrenness knowing not change  
    nor date nor event,  
A strength without speech, without motion,  
    yet stronger than speech ;  
A bulk without feature, a winter  
    of force long spent ;  
And neither is hope, nor terror,  
    nor weakness there.  
But a pressure and weight of oblivion  
    where no man is known,  
Nor feature from feature distinguished  
    but all overthrown ;  
Like the rampart of Time that confronts us  
    enormous and bare,

## AUGURIES

Immuring the dream and the vision  
    whereby we have breath ;  
Like Night and the end of the light  
    to them that despair :  
I stand in thy shadow and fear thee,  
    thou stature of Death !

## AUGURIES

### IV

Come away, come away ! There is light  
in the water that glides.  
Come away with the water that hastes  
from the heart of the hills,  
A sinuous ripple that sings  
and that nowhere abides,  
But broken, a murmuring sparkle,  
on ledges and sills  
Of the rock, as it swerves, carries in it  
a wavering fire,  
Like a thought, like a joy, that no barrier  
stays from its flight,  
Or a dance of young children that carol  
their heart of delight ;  
For it calls to the bud to burst open,  
the blade to thrust higher ;

## AUGURIES

To my heart, to my heart, it is calling—

“ O follow ! for here

Is thine own heart, quick and enamoured  
of love and of light ;

O follow my swiftness and stay not  
in shadows of fear ! ”

## AUGURIES

### V

On beds in the valley, on sunny  
half-islanded banks,  
Where roots are athirst and refreshed  
and saplings grow bold  
Bowing their youth to the breezes  
in quivering ranks,  
Primroses, a cluster of softness  
and fragrance, unfold ;  
And the fairy anemone, shaking  
her blossoms a gleam—  
They are kisses of light as they tremble  
to touch and to part—  
Is flushed, ah ! how faint, as with fire  
from the innermost heart  
Of a world in whose veins is a laughter  
as clear as the stream ;



## AUGURIES

And the music upholds me, enchants me,  
    and borne like a wave,  
I am melted, I flow, I am nought  
    but a hope and a dream,  
And in me is the youth of the flowers,  
    and grief in her grave.

## AUGURIES

### VI

Sudden a gust flings a shadow !  
    and shivering, the black  
Driven leaves at the roots of the oak-tree  
    are whirled up and lost  
Like the wild thoughts of fear into darkness,  
    and strong boughs crack,  
And a gloom rushes down with a wailing,  
    and out of it tossed  
Pale snow is outshaken, and hail  
    drops icily keen  
On young leaf and dead ; and awakened  
    in tree-tops aloud  
Is the roar of the storm that has gathered  
    the hills in a shroud  
Until naught of the towering rock  
    but in glimmers is seen,

## AUGURIES

A vision unfeatured, a phantom  
of terrible birth :—

Is it thou that appearest, a presence  
divined in the cloud,

Thy ribs and thy knees and thy breasts,  
O Titaness Earth ?

## AUGURIES

### VII

Is it thine, the great voice that confuses  
the winds and the floods  
In a meaningless cry as of madmen,  
a blindness of wrath,  
Smiting the bosses of oak  
and the virginal buds,  
Negligent where thou hast beaten  
thy desolate swath ?  
O thou, who hast armed as for battle  
thy creatures wild  
With fierceness of claw and of fang,  
of hoof and of horn,  
From thee, even thee, from thy heart-beat  
was man, too, born  
With flesh like a flower defenceless ?  
is he thy child ?

## AUGURIES

In whose eyes are wonder and trouble,  
    who strikes, yet the wrong  
He has done he turns from again  
    and with sorrow is torn :  
How shall his heart be as thine  
    or in thy way strong ?

## AUGURIES

### VIII

For who that is born of a woman  
    has known not the hour  
When the spirit within him is daunted  
    and this world comes  
As an army against him, a terror  
    of alien power,  
And fate, too vast to be borne,  
    his courage benumbs?  
Lost he seems as a child  
    upon mountains alone.  
Who has longed not then with longing  
    for a strength past pain  
To endure the rending of sorrow  
    that makes hope vain,  
To be kneaded in iron and stubborned  
    in armour of stone?

## AUGURIES

That hour when the heavens are shaken  
within the mind,

And the world is an enemy armed  
have I not known?

For the strength of the stony mountain  
have I not pined?

## AUGURIES

### IX

But lo ! on a sudden, with sighing  
the storm ends now  
In a radiant relenting : golden  
the light reappears  
With a glory of drops that are dancing  
on leaf and on bough ;  
And a music, a wandering music  
returns to my ears.  
From the primrose is breathing a freshness,  
and wild, shy smells  
From the moss, where the snowflake is melted  
to dazzling dew,  
And the voice of the birds on the banks  
is uplifted anew  
To the carolling voice of the river  
that onward swells.



## AUGURIES

Onward away, where the buds  
    gleam white on the tree !  
The rain and the gloom are forgotten  
    in heaven's young blue ;  
And my heart flows out with the river,  
    the river with me.

## AUGURIES

### X

In a trance, in a trance I listen ;  
    and into my soul,  
As it draws far back to a stillness  
    darkly stored  
With infinite sound, gather  
    and gradual roll  
The voices of all the torrents  
    on earth outpoured.  
“ We tarry not, rest not, sleep not,”  
    aloud they cry,  
“ We are swift as the hours that crumble  
    thy strength into dust ;  
We build thee no home, nor a fortress  
    wherein to trust ;  
But in us is the sound of dominion  
    falling from high,

## AUGURIES

And the kings of the world dethroned  
and towers laid bare.

We move, we are ever beyond ;  
we change, we die ;

We laugh, we live ; to follow  
wilt thou too dare ? ”

## AUGURIES

### XI

How shall I not go with you,  
    O waters swift ?  
Too long in yesterday's self  
    I tarry, and keep  
The dust of the world about me.  
    Uplift, uplift,  
Lose me, a wave in the waves  
    that laugh and leap !  
Lo, into uttermost time  
    my thoughts I send :  
And because in my heart is a flowing  
    no hour can bind,  
Because through the wrongs of the world  
    looking forth and behind,  
I find for my thought not a close,  
    for my soul not an end,

## AUGURIES

With you will I follow, nor crave  
the strength of the strong  
Nor a fortress of time to enshield me  
from storms that rend.  
This is life, this is home, to be poured  
as a stream, as a song.

## ELEGY

THE little waves fall in the wintry light  
On idle sands, along the bitter shore.  
The piling clouds are all a pale suspended flight ;  
They tarry and are moved no more.

Thin rushes tremble about the naked dune ;  
A hovering sail sinks down the utmost sea ;  
With wreckage and old foam the unending sands are  
    strewn ;  
And the waves heap their dumbness over me.

This is the Earth that lasts beyond our dreams  
Of time, and rushing onward without rest,  
Deludes us with her trancing silences, yet teems  
Fiercely, and burns within her breast,

Insatiate of youth, this old, old Earth,  
Who uses our spent ashes for her need,

## AUGURIES

Shaping the delicate marvel of her youngest birth,  
And still she kindles a new seed,

Intent on the unborn creature of her thought  
And busy in the waste: O even here,  
Though masked as in a calm of dumb frustration,  
    naught  
Stays her, no pang nor any fear,

But subtly, with a touch invisible,  
She is changing and compelling; and me too,  
Me too, upon the secret stream of that deep will  
She moves to a destiny ever new.

And yet this hour my spirit hides its face,  
And, backward turned, sighs out an idle pain  
For the remembered paths these feet may not retrace  
And the hours that cannot come again.

O hours of heavenly madness in delight  
That felt the swiftness and the throb of wings,  
That stole the burning soul of naked summer night  
And the moons of the perfumed springs!

## AUGURIES

Not now to you my longing stretches hands,  
But to lost hours, that had no fruit, no seed.  
Like fading of low light beyond forgotten lands,  
They have passed and are dead indeed.

And once, for once, unrecking Earth, you seem  
With me to linger and to acquiesce,  
To share the desolation of my doubt and dream,  
And to ponder upon barrenness.

The wind lulls on the waste, and has no will.  
The foiled tides hush and falter at their bound.  
A little sand is blown, then all again is still ;  
And the clouds hang silence around,

With such an absence felt in the lone skies,  
Suppression of such tears, profoundly sprung  
In long-remembering looks of unconversing eyes  
As when the old bury the young.



## THE MIRROR

### I

WHERE is all the beauty that hath been ?

Where the bloom ?

Dust on boundless wind ? Grass dropt into fire ?

Shall Earth boast at last of all her teeming womb,

All that suffered, all that triumphed, to inspire

Life in perfect mould and speech, the proud mind's  
lamp serene—

Nothing ? Space be starry in tremendous choir—

For whom ?

In this deserted chamber, as the evening falls,

Silent curtains move no fold ;

Long has ebbd the floor's pale gold ;

Shadows deepen down the silent walls.

The air is mute as dreams beneath a sleeper's face,

Distant, undivined ;

## AUGURIES

But every hovering shadow seems to hold  
Want untold.

The look of things forsaken, each in its own place,  
Memories without home in any mind,  
Idle, rich neglect and perfume old—  
Over these the glimmer of the twilight fades ;  
Infinite human solitude invades  
Forms relinquished, hues resigned.

O little mirror, round and clear,  
In solemn-coloured shadow lying  
Cold as the moon, pale as a tear,  
With spiritual silver beam replying  
Indifferently to all things as to one ;  
Beauty's relic and oblivion,  
But void, void, void ! Desolate as a cave  
Abandoned even of the breaking wave,  
A home of youth and mirth, when all its guests are gone !  
As I touch thee in the silence here,  
Where thou liest alone, apart,  
Through the silence of my heart  
Thou flashest elfin flames of fear.

## AUGURIES

Like a thought of lost delight,  
Like love-sweetness, like despair,  
Come faint spices of the night  
Floating on the darkened air.  
The air is tender with the sense of dew,  
Is tranced, is dim, is heavy, as if there hung  
Within the tinges of its shadowy hue  
Ghosts of lost flowers, with all their petals young,  
And the young beauty they made incense to.

O forlorn mirror, is there nothing thine?  
The cup is emptied of its fragrant wine,  
The dress is vacant of the breathing form,  
And thou that gleam'st  
All absence of what once moved gracious, white and  
warm

In thy clear wells, or luminously mused,  
O little mirror long disused,  
Laid in this empty bower's recess,  
Thou thyself seem'st  
The soul and mystery of emptiness.

## AUGURIES

Yet if I should raise thee now,  
As once and oft, thou knowest how,  
Hand and slim wrist, smooth as a flower-stem, raised  
Thy silent brilliance, and with intent brow  
Eyes within thee gazed  
Seeking thy oracle,  
Shall not from those pellucid secrecies appear  
Not I, nor any shape of this dim room,  
But all that in thy cave of lambent gloom  
Hath dwelt and still may dwell,  
Ambushed like visions bound in sleeping memory's cell ;  
All that thy brightness buries as the sea  
Tossed bones and crusted gold : had I the key,  
Mightst thou not ope thy depths, mightst thou not  
yield,  
Wonder of wonders ! What since time began  
Was never yet revealed,  
The unmapped, unmeasured, secret heart of man ?

Half-shut eyes voluptuously  
Lightening, as the bosom swells and glows ;  
Smile to smile flowering from an ardent thought :

## AUGURIES

O what moments didst thou deify  
With the promise of life crushed to wine  
Redder than the cheek's triumphant rose !  
—But from deeper places hast thou brought  
Nothing ? Are not other answers thine ?

Hast thou not heard, hast thou not seen,  
Hast thou not shown, hast thou not found  
Shames unwhispered, terrors bound,  
Earthquake pangs of aghast surmise,  
When with itself the heart has been  
Face to face in an hour profound ?  
Out of thee what ghosts shall rise,  
Shapes and gestures, and accusing eyes !  
World-flattered faces in midnights of pain ;  
Faces defaced by tiger-lusts insane ;  
Faces appalled before a self unguessed ;  
Ashaming dawns on faces fallen and dispossessed !  
O what glimpses hast thou flashed in dread,  
With what hauntings wast thou visited,  
Apparitions of a soul made bare  
Shuddering at the thing it looked on there !

## AUGURIES

But thou art stainless, though the heart has bled,  
Thou art silent as the air  
Or the wave that closes smooth above the drowner's  
head.

No man hath seen his soul  
Save for a glimpse in the night  
Brief as an ember of coal  
Blown for an instant bright.  
To see his own soul as it is,  
Eternity must enter him  
With the torches of Seraphim  
That have shone to the last abyss.  
Mirror, couldst thou show the spirit this,  
Then within this narrow room  
Were the Judgment and the Doom.  
For by so much as its own self it knew  
Searched by that burning vision through and through  
To the innermost of where it crouched and hid  
Amid the husks of the mean deeds it did,  
Amid the shadow of all it shunned, the quest  
It turned from, and in palterings acquiesced,

## AUGURIES

To the uttermost of what its eager passion  
Caught of the glory springing to re-fashion  
Hope and the world, and great with pity saw  
Life darkly wrestling with the angel, Law—  
By such a measure, molten in that fire,  
Should the soul mete itself on God's desire,  
Suffer at last all wisdom, and endure  
The beam and vision of a thought all-pure.  
O were not this to taste Heaven's dawn, or dwell,  
Because of knowledge, in the pains of Hell?

## AUGURIES

### II

Where is all the wailing, all the want  
That sorrow tore  
From Love's bleeding breast? Extinguished quite?  
Shall the wide-winged glory of hope extravagant,  
Shall the laughter, shall the song that sprang to  
soar  
Fall, and no ear hearken, and their failing flight  
Echoless waste walls of adamant  
Ignore?

Draw wide the curtain! Fabulous, remote  
Night is come.  
Over Earth's lost bosom fragrant breathings float  
Into glimmering heights of gloom.  
But upon the solitary verge extreme  
Steals a beam.  
Hushed and sudden, ere the eye could note,  
Lo, the moon is there!



## AUGURIES

Innocence of splendour, gazing bare,  
Drenches leaves in quiet, thought in dream.  
Is it Earth's pale mirror lifted lone  
For an answer to her million sighs ?  
Can that far Tranquillity atone  
In the gaze of those unnumbered eyes  
For the pang and for the moan,  
For the heart's dim burial and long dirge,  
Luring, as she lures the mutinous sea-surge,  
To her will of peace this human tide ?

From a charmed shadow on the shorn hill-side  
Hand-in-hand lovers through the trees emerge,  
And pause ; their very souls are glorified,  
Their feet tread airy on immaterial ground,  
With marvelling gaze they feel  
That well of spiritual light o'erflow .  
The listening hush, and steal  
Fear and trouble, as though  
The world were one vast music of ethereal sound  
And they a stillness in the midst of it.  
Peace, peace and pity ! pardon, pity, peace,  
Passing all mortal wit !

## AUGURIES

O truth long-sought and magically found,  
O wonder and release!  
O secret of the world long-hidden in day's dust!  
They bathe their hearts in that sweet dew, their hands  
Thrill clasping in a touch that understands  
Nothing magnificent but a divine surrender  
Absolving and august.  
To distances immersed and tender  
Unfolds this vale of struggle hard and pent,  
Region of unwon ravishment  
In unadventured lands,  
A place of leaves and lonely light and leafy scent  
Storied like that old forest of the perilous Fleece.

Sorceress of million nights!  
Hast thou charmed indeed the brew,  
When with stealth of perverse rites—  
Mouths that mutter, hands that strew,—  
Love tormented and malign,  
Flushed with terror like a maddening wine  
Sought another's rue?  
Hecate of the cross-roads, hast thou hearkened

## AUGURIES

To the sailing witch's mew  
And the felon raven's croak  
When the shuddering winds were darkened  
And the leaves rushed from the withered oak ?  
Ah, not these foul toys would I invoke !  
O for some supreme enchanting spell,  
Voice of a God crying aloud,  
Felt and feared on Earth's heart-strings,  
To conjure and to compel  
Like a spectre from the shroud  
Or like incense-dust that springs  
Into fire and fragrant cloud,  
Out of thy blind caves and cold recesses  
Out of that blank mirror's desert beam  
All the unnumbered longings and wild prayers,  
Infinite heart-broken tendernesses,  
Indignations and despairs  
That from man's long wound of passion stream,  
Sucked like vapour, like a mist of tears  
Into that imagined peace, that ecstasy !  
O surely, surely, thou hast wrought thy part  
In every secret and tempestuous heart,

## AUGURIES

Thou that hast gleamed on thousand battle-crimsoned  
spears,

Thou that wast radiant on Gethsemane !

She has seen not, she has heard not.

Hearts have leapt for her, but she has stirred not.

Pity she has made, but none has had,

Though her magic mingles with Earth's want

And the trouble of Earth's tender sons,

Thunder of the builded Babylons,

Music of the dreaming poet's chant,

Venture of the steering argosies,

With a light as of divine fulfilment clad

Breathing in for ever syllables of peace.

Peace, is it peace ? Yet Earth, dark Earth,

Mother, O Mother, thou that nourishest

In the blind patience of thy teeming breast

Hope without end ; who drivest life to birth,

Yet numberest not our dear and sacred dead,

Unheeding of our anguish and lost cries

So thou mayst build beyond us, in our stead,

A race enriched with all for which we bled,

## AUGURIES

Of haughtier stature and of kinglier eyes ;  
Thou of whose vast desire strong realms of old,  
The dynasty of empires, were but waves  
That towered and crashed into their splendid graves,  
For thine unresting hunger to remould  
Yet mightier, O insatiable ! Doth fear  
Not shake thee, Mother, seest thou not ev'n here  
In that cold mirror's answer what shall steep  
Thee also in oblivion ? Thou shalt keep  
Of all the fruit of thy most fiery spring,  
Stored riches of thy sleepless trafficking,  
And proud perfection thou hast travailed for,  
Nothing ! The beauty that thy body bore  
Fresh and exulting (Mother, dost not weep ?)  
Laughter of streams, young flowers, and starry seas,  
Pillar and palace, heaven-faced images  
That man has wrought, his tossing heart to ease,  
Nothing ! To cloud shall vanish the deed done ;  
The bannered victory, the wrong borne alone,  
Nothing ! and thou be desolate and none  
To feel thy desolation : emptiness,  
Night within night, immense and issueless,

## AUGURIES

Till as a breath upon the mirror dies,  
Fades the last smoke of thy long sacrifice.

Out of the deeps, trembling, the soul  
Cries through night to the silent pole :  
“ I that am want, I that am grief,  
I that am love, I that am mirth,  
I that am fear, I that am fire,  
Though thou clothe me in beauty brief,  
Though I have worn thy sweet attire,  
I, thy endless sorrow, Earth,  
Dwell in the glory of God's desire,  
That kneads for ever in the flesh  
Of man, to make his spirit afresh,  
A marvel more than all thy wandering seas,  
And mightier than thy caverned mysteries,  
Nor stays nor sleeps, but world on world transfuses  
Melted ever to diviner uses,  
Through infinite swift changes burning,  
Itself the end, no end discerning,  
Till all the universe be wrought  
Into its far perfecting thought.

## AUGURIES

Then this mind of cloud and rue  
Shall in eternal mind be new,  
Mirror of God, pure and alone,  
See and be seen, know and be known."

## TO TIME

TIME, Time, who choosest  
All in the end well ;  
Who severely refuseth  
Fames upon trumpets blown  
Loud for a day, and alone  
Makest truth to excel :

Shadow of God, slowly  
Gathering words, long  
Scorned, to make them holy,  
And deeds like stars bright  
That none perceived in the light,  
Lifting the weak to be strong :

Shall I not praise thee,  
Thou just judge ? Yet O  
What so long stays thee ?



## AUGURIES

Why must thy feet halt,  
While our tears grow salt  
And our old hopes go !

Beauty is throned at last ;  
Truth rings falsehood's knell ;  
But our strength, our joy is past  
While our hearts wait thee ·  
Time, Time, I hate thee,  
Hate thee, and rebel.

## THE TIGER-LILY

WHAT wouldst thou with me? By what spell  
My spirit allure, absorb, compel?  
The last long beam that thou didst drink  
Is buried now on evening's brink.  
The garden's leafy alleys lone,  
With shadowy stem and mossy stone,  
Intangibly seem now to dress  
Colour and odour motionless.  
A stealing darkness breathes around,  
As if it rose out of the ground,  
And tinging into it soft gold  
Ebbs, and the dewy green glooms cold,  
And dim boughs into black retire.  
But thou, seven-throated Flower of Fire,  
Sombring all the shadows near thee,  
Dost still, as if the night did fear thee,  
Glory amid the failing hues

## AUGURIES

And this invading dusk refuse,  
And breathing out thy languid spice  
My spirit to thine own entice.

Warm wafts that linger touch my cheek.  
What is it in me thou wouldst seek ?  
Thou meltest all my thoughts away  
As leaf on leaf is mingled grey  
In shadow on shadow, past discerning.  
O cold to touch, to vision burning,  
What power is in thee so to change  
And my familiar sense estrange ?  
Thou seemest born within a mind  
That has no ken of human kind ;  
Remote from quick heart, curious brain,  
Feeling in joy, thinking in pain,  
Remote as beauty of sleeping snow  
Is from a flame's wild shredded glow ;  
Remote from mirth, anger or care,  
Or the deep wound and want of prayer,  
Yet like some word of splendid speech  
Beyond our human hearing's reach,

## AUGURIES

Whose meaning, could its sound be known,  
Might earth's imprisoned secret own  
That binds as with a viewless thread  
This throbbing heart of joy and dread  
With tremblings of the wayside grass  
And pillars of the mountain pass  
And circling of the stars extreme  
In boundless heights of heaven.

I dream

My dark heart into earth, I heap  
My spirit over with cold sleep,  
Resign my senses, one by one,  
To glooms that never saw the sun,  
Fade from this self to what behind  
Earth's myriad shapes is urging blind,  
Am emptied of man's name, become  
A blankness, as the mountain dumb,  
If so I may attain to win  
The secret thou art rooted in.

Can life renounce not life? Must still  
The inexorably moving will

## AUGURIES

Seek and make rankle the dulled sting  
Of essence? Must the desert spring  
Revive, and the forgotten seed  
Be drawn again by its old need  
Through blind beginnings of a sense,  
And dark desire of difference,  
And fear, and hope that feeds on fear,  
To its own destined character?  
I cannot lose nor abdicate  
The separateness of my state,  
Nor thou, that out of burial drawn  
Through the black earth didst shoot and dawn  
Tender and small and green, and mount  
In air, a springing, silent fount,  
Until the cold bud, sheathed so long,  
Slow swelled and burst like sudden song  
Into the sun's delight, and naught  
Of costliest tissue ever wrought,  
Fragrant and in rare colours dyed,  
For the white body of a bride  
Or king's anointing feast, could so  
Enrich the noon or inly glow

## AUGURIES

To lose the sweetly-kindled sense  
In mystery of magnificence.

Was there no cost to make thee fair?  
Did no far-off long pains prepare  
Those clustered curves of incense-breath?  
Did nothing suffer unto death  
To poise thee in thy glory? Came  
No tinge upon thy coloured flame  
From sighs? Was there no bosom bled  
That thou mightest be perfected—  
As, serving his taskmaster's doom  
A brown slave patient at the loom  
Toils, weaving some fine web of gold,  
More precious than his race, to fold  
In soft attire an idle queen,  
When long his own thin hands have been  
Dust, but in all their toil arrayed  
She through her pillared palace-shade  
Glows flower-like, and her young gaze has  
No thought of any deep *Alas!*  
Threaded into the sumptuous vest

## AUGURIES

That lies upon her perfumed breast ;  
Or as at crimsoned eve on high  
Some dying warrior turns his eye  
Where, lifted over spear and sword  
Among the loud victorious horde,  
A golden trophy gleams with blood  
That from his own spent body flowed,  
And trumpets sound across the sand  
To sunset in a conquered land ?

O thou wast from life's weltering ore  
Breathed by enchanting mind before  
Man was in his own shape. Far, far  
Thou seemest as the evening star !  
Yet movest me like that lone light  
Fetched through the ages of the night  
Into this breathing garden-close ;  
Or like the things that no man knows  
In a child's eyes ; or like, for one  
Watching a seaward-sinking sun,  
Beyond cold wastes of water pale  
The dim communion of a sail.

## AUGURIES

Ah ! though I know not what thou art,  
Yet in the fastness of my heart  
How shall I tell what lies unwrought  
Into the figured films of thought,  
Uncoloured yet by sharp or sweet,  
Or what forge of transforming heat  
Threatens this world of use and fact  
Wherewith the busy brain is packed?  
Thou art of me, O Flower of Flame,  
What is not uttered, has no name,  
The springing of a want unmated,  
A joy no fallen hour has dated.  
Some of my mystery thou holdest,  
Secretly, splendidly unfoldest.



## THE BOWL OF WATER

SHE is eight years old.  
When she laughs, her eyes laugh ;  
Light dances in her eyes ;  
She tosses back her long hair  
And with a song replies ;  
Then on light feet she darts away  
Tripping, mischievously gay.  
But now into this room of shadow  
Coming slowly with the sun's long ray  
And all the morning on her simple hair,  
O how serious-eyed  
She steps pre-occupied  
Holding a bowl of water  
Poised in her fingers' care,—  
Water quivering with cool gleams  
And wavering and a-roll  
Within the clear glass bowl,

## AUGURIES

That brimmed and luminous seems  
A wonder and a shining secrecy,  
As if it were the world's most precious thing,  
So open-clear that all have passed it by.  
Cut stalks of iris lie  
On the bare table, flowers and swelling buds  
Clasped in close curves up to the purple tips  
That shall to-morrow burst  
And shoot a splendid wing,  
When they have drawn into their veins the spring  
Which those young hands, with the drops bright on  
    them,  
So all intently bring ;  
Costless felicity,  
Living and unbought !  
But over me, O flowers  
That neither ask nor sigh,  
Comes the thought,  
How all this world is wanting and athirst !

## FERRY HINKSEY

BEYOND the ferry water  
That fast and silent flowed,  
She turned, she gazed a moment,  
Then took her onward road

Between the winding willows  
To a city white with spires ·  
It seemed a path of pilgrims  
To the home of earth's desires.

Blue shade of golden branches  
Spread for her journeying,  
Till he that lingered lost her  
Among the leaves of Spring.

## IN THE FOREST

THE beeches towering high  
Greenly cloud the sky.  
The shadows all are green  
With living sun unseen.  
O wonderful the sound  
Of green leaves all around,  
When nothing yet is heard  
Of windy branches stirred  
But wavering lights alone  
Innumerable blown  
Come trembling, and then cease  
Upon a trembling peace.  
What breathed in it? A sigh?  
Or something yet more shy  
Of speech? A spirit-kiss?  
A waft of fairy bliss  
That seeks for voice on our

## AUGURIES

Lips, there to find its flower  
In some sweet syllable ?  
O Love, I cannot tell ;  
But light brims in your eyes  
And makes divine replies.

## THE FOREST PINE

A HUNDRED autumns fallen in fire  
To dust and mould  
Have faded from their perished gold  
To throne thee higher,  
O Titan pine, that soarest straight  
From ground to sky without a mate,  
Like one desire.

Dark is the hollow as a cup  
Of shadow immense,  
Of daylight-daunting dimness, whence  
Thou springest up  
Far into light, to take thy fill  
Of splendour, solitary in still  
Magnificence.

## AUGURIES

Leaves of the low brake hide a stir  
Of small soft things :  
Life, busy in flit of secret wings  
And slinking fur,  
Pricks buried seeds that upward thrust,  
And green through germinating dust  
Triumphant stings.

But thou, that seemest earth to scorn  
And air to claim,  
With all thy plummy spire aflame  
And crest upborne  
In the blue air, so far, so high,  
As if the silence of the sky  
About thee came,

Thou hidest all the sappy stream  
That in thee swells ;  
Motionless fibre nothing tells :  
And thou dost seem  
To tower in glorious ignorance  
Of earth's small stir and chafe, a trance,  
A soaring dream !

## AUGURIES

And in a trance thou holdest me  
With bated will ;  
And I am still, as thou art still,  
My spirit free,  
My body charm-dissolved to naught  
But the vibration of a thought,  
If thought could be.

O hush ! within the blood is felt  
An airy fear,  
A faltering ; and the heart can hear  
The silence melt  
To something frailer than a sound  
Borne from the wide horizon's bound  
To the inward ear.

Slowly, ah ! slowly, a hush begins,  
A trembling, where  
Those branches sleep on golden air,  
And gradual wins  
A voice, a music, a long surge,  
Sweet as a song, sad as a dirge,  
Sighed out like prayer !



## AUGURIES

The singer knows not what he sings.

A lonely sound

Comes trembling through him from profound

Aerial springs.

The songs, the sighs, the world exiled,

Seek him and in his heart-throbs wild

Still their wild wings.

## FIDE ET LITERIS

(WRITTEN FOR THE FOURTH CENTENARY  
OF ST. PAUL'S SCHOOL.)

WHEN the long-clouded spirit of Europe drew  
Life from Greek springs, frost could no longer bind,  
And old truth shone like fresh dawn on the blind,  
Our Founder sowed his pregnant seed : he knew  
No crabbed rule ; rather he chose a clue  
That should emband us of our historied kind  
Comrades, and keep in us a morning mind,  
Since to the wise Learning is always New.  
In Faith and Letters he enshrined his light ;  
Faith, the divine adventure that holds on  
Through this world's forest into worlds unknown,  
And Letters, that since speech on earth began  
As one unended sentence burning write  
The hope, the triumph, and the tears of Man.

## PAST AND FUTURE

PAST is the past ! But no, it is not past,  
In us, in us, it quickens, wants, aspires ;  
And on our hearts the unknown dead have cast  
The hunger and the thirst of their desires.

Unknown the pangs, the peace we too prepare !  
What shakes this bosom shall reverberate  
Through ages unconceived : in that deep lair  
The unguessed, un hoped, undreaded issues wait.

Our pregnant acts are all unprophesied.  
We dream sublime conclusions ; destine, plan,  
Build and unbuild ; yet turn no jot aside  
The something infinite that moves in Man.

We write The End where fate has scarce begun ;  
And no man knows the thing that he has done.

## THUNDER ON THE DOWNS

WIDE earth, wide heaven, and in the summer air  
Silence ! The summit of the Down is bare  
Between the climbing crests of wood ; but those  
Great sea-winds, wont, when the wet South-West  
blows,

To rock tall beeches and strong oaks aloud  
And strew torn leaves upon the streaming cloud,  
To-day are idle, slumbering far aloof.  
Under the solemn height and gorgeous roof  
Of cloud-built sky, all earth is indolent.  
Wandering hum of bees and thymy scent  
Of the short turf enrich pure loneliness ;  
Scarcely an airy topmost-twining tress  
Of bryony quivers where the thorn it wreathes ;  
Hot fragrance from the honeysuckle breathes,  
And sweet the rose floats on the arching briar's  
Green fountain, sprayed with delicate frail fires.

## AUGURIES

For clumps of thicket, dark beneath the blaze  
Of the high westering sun, beset the ways  
Of smooth grass narrowing where the slope runs steep  
Down to green woods, and glowing shadows keep  
A freshness round the mossy roots, and cool  
The light that sleeps as in a chequered pool  
Of golden air. O woods, I love you well,  
I love the flowers you hide, your ferny smell ;  
But here is sweeter solitude, for here  
My heart breathes heavenly space ; the sky is near  
To thought, with heights that fathomlessly glow ;  
And the eye wanders the wide land below.

And this is England ! June's undarkened green  
Gleams on far woods ; and in the vales between  
Grey hamlets, older than the trees that shade  
Their ripening meadows, are in quiet laid,  
Themselves a part of the warm, fruitful ground.  
The little hills of England rise around ;  
The little streams that wander from them shine  
And with their names remembered names entwine  
Of old renown and honour, fields of blood

## AUGURIES

High causes fought on, stubborn hardihood  
For freedom spent, and songs, our noblest pride,  
That in the heart of England never died,  
And burning still make splendour of our tongue.  
Glories enacted, spoken, suffered, sung,  
You lie emblazoned on this land now sleeping ;  
And southward, over leagues of forest sweeping  
White on the verge glistens the famous sea,  
That English wave, on which so haughtily  
Towered her sails, and one sail homeward bore  
Past capes of silently lamenting shore  
Victory's dearest dead. O shores of home,  
Since by the vanished watch-fire shields of Rome  
Dinted this upland turf, what hearts have ached  
To see you far away, what eyes have waked  
Ere dawn to watch those cliffs of long desire  
One after one rise in their voiceless choir  
Out of the twilight over the rough blue  
Like music ! . . .

But now heavy gleams imbrue  
The inland air : breathless the valleys hold

## AUGURIES

Their colours in a veil of sultry gold  
With mingled shadows that have ceased to crawl;  
For far in heaven is thunder! Over all  
A single cloud in slow magnificence  
Climbs like a mountain, gradual and immense,  
With awful head unstirring, and moved on  
Against the zenith, towers above the sun.  
And still it thickens luminous fold on fold  
Of fatal colour, ominously scrolled  
And fleeced with fire; above the sun it towers  
Like some vast thought quickening a world not ours  
Remote in the waste blue, as if behind  
Its rim were splendour that could smite us blind,  
So doom-piled and intense it crests heaven's height  
And mounting makes a menace of the light.

A menace! Yes, for when light comes, we fear.  
Light that may touch, as the pure angel-spear,  
Us to ourselves, make visible, make start  
The apparition of the very heart  
And mystery of our thoughts, awaked from under  
The mask of cheating habit, and to thunder

## AUGURIES

Bare in a moment of white fire what we  
Have feared and fled, our own reality.

And if a lightning now were loosed in flame  
Out of the darkness of the cloud to claim  
Thy heart, O England, how wouldst thou be known  
In that hour? How to the quick core be shown  
And seen? What cry should from thy very soul  
Answer the judgment of that thunder-roll!

I hear a voice arraign thee. "Where is now  
The exaltation that once lit thy brow?  
Thou countest all thy ocean-sundered lands,  
Thou heapest up the labours of thy hands,  
Thou seest all thy ships upon the seas.  
But in thine own heart mean idolatries  
Usurp devotion, choke thee and annul  
Noble excess of spirit, and make dull  
Thine eyes, enfleshed with much dominion.  
Art thou so great and is the glory gone?  
Do these bespeak thy freedom who deflower  
Time, and make barren every senseless hour,  
Who from themselves hurry, like men afraid



## AUGURIES

Lest what they are be to themselves betrayed?  
Or those who in their huddled thousands sweat  
To buy the sleep that helps them to forget?—  
Life lies unused, life with its loveliness!  
While the cry ravens still, 'Possess, Possess!'  
And there is no possession. All the lust  
Of gainful man is quieted in dust;  
His faith, his fear, his joy, his doom he owns,  
No more: the rest is parcelled with his bones  
Save what the imagination of his heart  
Can to the labour of his hands impart,  
Making stones serve his spirit's desire, and breathe.  
But thou, what dost thou to the world bequeath,  
Who gatherest riches in a waste of mind  
Unto what end, O confidently blind,  
Forgetful of the things that grow not old  
And alone live and are not bought or sold?"

Speaks that voice truth? Is it for this that great  
And tender spirits suffered scorn and hate,  
Loved to the utmost, poured themselves, gave all  
Nor counted cost, spirits imperial?

## AUGURIES

Where are they now, they that our memory guard  
Among the nations? Shall I say enstarred  
And throned aloof? No, not from heavens of thought  
Watching our muddied brief procession, not  
Judges sublime above us, without share  
In our thronged ways of struggle, hope, despair,  
But in our blood, our dreams, our deeds they stir,  
Strive on our lips for language, shame and spur  
The sluggard in us, out of darkness come  
Like summoned champions when the world is dumb ;  
Within our hearts they wait with all they gave :  
Woe to us, woe, if we become their grave !  
It shall not be. Darken thy pall, and trail,  
Thunder of heaven, above the valleys pale !  
Another England in my vision glows.  
And she is armed within ; at last she knows  
Herself, and what to her own soul belongs.  
Mid the world's irremediable wrongs  
She keeps her faith ; and nothing of her name  
Or of her handiwork but doth proclaim  
Her purpose. Her own soul hath made her free,  
Not circumstance ; she knows no victory

## AUGURIES

Save of the mind : in her is nothing done,  
No wrong, no shame, no glory of any one,  
But is the cause of all and each, a thing  
Felt like a fire to kindle and to sting  
The proud blood of a nation. On her brows  
Is hope ; her body doth her spirit house  
Express and eloquent, not dumb and frore ;  
And her voice echoes over sea and shore,  
And all the lands and isles that are her own  
In choric interchange and antiphon  
Answer, as fancy hears in yonder cloud  
From vale to vale repeated low and loud  
The still-suspended thunder.

Hearts of Youth,  
High-beating, ardent, quick in hope and ruth  
And noble anger, O wherever now  
You dedicate your uncorrupted vow  
To be an energy of Light, a sword  
Of the ever-living Will, amid abhorred  
Din of the reeking street and populous den  
Where under the great stars blind lusts of men

## AUGURIES

War on each other, or escaped to hills  
Where peace the solitary evening fills,  
Or far remote on other soils of earth  
Keeping the dearness of your fathers' hearth  
On vast plains of the West, or Austral strands  
Of the warm under-world, or storied lands  
Of the orient sun, or over ocean ways  
Stemming the wave through blue or stormy days,  
Wherever, as the circling light slopes round,  
On human lips is heard an English sound,  
O scattered, silent, hidden and unknown,  
Be lifted up, for you are not alone !  
High-beating hearts, to your deep vows be true !  
Live out your dreams, for England lives in you.

## THE TRAM

(IN THE MIDLANDS)

### I

A GRINDING swerve, a hissing spurt,  
And then a droning through the dirt !  
The tram glides on its wonted way  
Of everyday, of everyday.  
Past every corner still the same  
Squat houses huddle, meanly serried,  
An image of the mute and maim  
With life behind their windows buried ;  
Blank windows staring under slate  
That presses on them desolate  
As eyes bereft of brows, and drips  
On puddled, flowerless garden strips.  
  
Is it evening, noon or morn ?  
Is it Autumn, is it Spring ?  
Nothing tells but the forlorn

## AUGURIES

Rain that is over everything.  
A rain that seems too slow to fall  
And drifts, an immaterial pall  
Of wetness in the air ; it leaves  
A dismal glistening on the eaves,  
And grimed upon the pavement lies,  
For the dirt is in the very skies.

Like without, and like within !  
Dull bodies clatter out and in,  
And the bell clangs, as they subside  
On the long seat, and on we glide,  
Defensive creatures, all askance  
At one another ! Small eyes lance  
Suspicion ; fingers tighten close  
On baskets ; thin lips will not lose  
A word too much, and skirts draw shy  
From any touch too neighbourly.  
And now a bald-head, grossly quaking  
And lurching round for elbow space,  
Sets a black-beaded bonnet shaking  
Above a pinched averted face

## AUGURIES

Or stiffly-bastioned heaving bust  
That virtuously expands distrust.

And all the fluttered narrow looks  
Appear like little painful books  
Of soiled accounts, where bargains keep  
Their cherished tale of capture cheap.  
For life is all a cheapening,  
And the rain is over everything,  
And there is neither mirth nor woe.  
Who made it so, who made it so ?

## AUGURIES

### II

As I muse, as I muse,  
Numbed at heart, with eyelids leaden,  
Stupefying senses lose  
All but sounds and sights that deaden ;  
Glassy gaze and shuffled feet,  
Humid glide of the endless street,  
Passing by with rank on rank  
Of dripping roofs and windows blank,  
Till one dull motion drones the brain  
Out of meaning, out of time,  
And the blood beats to a chime  
As of bells with mouth inane.

And now a monstrous ark it seems  
That's hurried with the speed of dreams  
Through streets of ages ! On it drives  
Among unnumbered years and lives.  
And now the sound grows like a surging,



## AUGURIES

As if this speed a host were urging,  
And in the sound are voices coming  
Thick, and tumultuous music drumming ;  
And savage odours are astir  
Of forest leaves and hidden fur,  
And naked limbs of hunters glide  
And warriors in the great sun ride,  
And mutinous-nostrilled horses champ  
With restless necks are strongly stamping.  
The Roman purple passes proud  
Like an eagle through a cloud.  
Lo, knights-at-arms with pennons dancing  
To death's adventure gay advancing,  
And here a queen that is a bride  
Crimson-robed and lonely-eyed,  
And there a pilgrim's dusty feet  
Faring to the heavenly city ;  
And now an idle beggar singing  
How the sun and wind are sweet,  
A wayside song, a wanderer's ditty :  
And still around, out of the ground,  
The armies of the dead are springing ;

## AUGURIES

And with unearthly speed and number  
Compelled like those that walk in slumber  
They follow, follow ! And at my ear  
An imp that squats with demon leer  
Is screaming, See the Triumph go !  
See for whom the trumpets blow !  
The prophesied, that goes before us !  
This is he, Time's crown and wonder  
That has the very stars for plunder ;  
This is he, the Promethean,  
(Hark the ever-rolling pæan  
With a wilderness of apes for chorus !)  
Who fetched from heaven the stormy fire  
To serve and toil for his desire,  
And plumbed the globe, and spoiled old Earth  
Of all the secrets of her birth ;  
See him, throned triumphant there,  
Like a toad, with glassy stare ;  
Eyes, and sees not ; ears, and hears not !  
Heart, and hopes not ; soul, and fears not !

## AUGURIES

### III

A boy with a bunch of primroses !  
He sits uneasy, flushed of cheek,  
With wandering eyes and does not speak.  
His hands are hot ; the flowers are his.

But Spring, O Spring is in the world.  
And eager fancy forward flying  
Sees little fronds almost uncurled  
Where still the dead brown bracken's lying,  
And a thousand thousand shining drops  
Upon the young leaves of the copse.  
The spurge has all his green cups filled—  
A gust will shake and brim them over—  
From cuckoo-flowers the rain is spilled ;  
I smell first sweetness of the clover.  
Long tendrils of the vetch are thirsting,  
White blossom on the thorn is bursting ;  
Twigs redden on the sapling oaks

## AUGURIES

Above the grass that shoots and soaks ;  
The streams flow fast by reed and rush ;  
Loose notes come fluted from the thrush ;  
In forky boughs and leafy shade  
There's busyness for every wing ;  
And sweet through stalk and root and blade  
Run juices of the wine of Spring.  
But the primrose perfume, faint and rare  
Is like a sigh of Spring forsaken.  
O shy soft beauty, torn and taken !  
O delicate bruised tissue fair !  
You are like the eyes of an outcast fond,  
Or a face seen at a prison-grate :  
For Beauty 's but a vagabond  
And knows no home and has no mate.

## AUGURIES

### IV

Alas ! what dungeon walls we rear,  
For our possession, round us here !  
We make a castle of defence  
Out of the dullness of the sense ;  
Possess our burrow like the mole ;  
And with the blundering hands of chance  
Grow cruel in our ignorance.  
What is another's springing soul  
That I should seek to force and bind it ?  
To catch my gain where it has tripped,  
To thrust it down when it has slipped,  
To stupefy and dumb and blind it,  
Fortress my virtue with its failing,  
And kindle courage at its quailing ?  
What is another's thought, that I  
Should wish it mine in effigy ?  
Ah ! we that grasp and bind and tame

## AUGURIES

It is ourselves, ourselves we maim ;  
We maim the world. The very Spring  
Stops all mute and will not sing,  
The sapless branches will not quicken,  
The cells of secret honey sicken,  
Giant brambles writhe and twist  
About the trees in poisonous mist.  
The spider fattens ; flies oppress,  
And the buds are blackened promises,  
Nothing stirs, but the leaf is shed,  
And all the world of wonder 's dead !  
O for the touch that shall awake !  
O for the word that shall renew !  
And all this crust of sense shall break  
And the world of wonder pierce us through ;  
The scales be fallen from a sight  
Ravished with fountains of delight,  
And the sad dullness of our scorn  
Be like remembered night at morn :  
Then we shall feel what we have made  
Of one another, and be afraid.

## TOWERS OF ITALY

NEVER were towers so fair, so bold,  
Passionately springing, arrogant towers !  
Nor air so blue over roofs so old,  
Nor on ancient walls so rare a gold,  
When I found my love among the flowers.

O mighty Spirits, never to be stilled,  
Whose glorious works concluded seem,  
Yet in whom is a glory unfulfilled,  
And still for us you build, you build,  
What have you told her out of your dream ?

She comes from shadow of streets below,  
And surely, O Spirits, you were there,  
Pacing among the shadows ; lo,  
In her eyes is a light, on her face a glow  
As she comes through a golden air.

## AUGURIES

Do you feel, do you breathe and throb again  
In her bosom's beat and shining eyes,—  
As an old chant heavy with world-old pain  
Is lifted afresh in a splendid strain  
On young lips, up to the skies?

My love is fair as a voice that sings,  
In a scented garden of joyous flowers.  
Do the old walls keep their buried things?  
Yet the air is astir as with throbbing of wings  
And heaven with the springing of the towers.

The hills lift a loneliness around ;  
But my love has a light about her head ;  
And as if they uttered names renowned,  
Bells from the towers to the silences resound—  
Voices of the youth of the dead !



## VIGIL

IN the hollow of pale night upon the moor  
The silence blows a perfume : O but hark !  
A sound is in the bosom of the dark,  
Breathed like a secret from the glimmering shore ;  
A vigil of unearthly sound, the sea  
That never slumbers and begins anew,  
And melts into our hearts amid the dew,  
Murmuring on the moor to you and me.

Out of a silence dateless as the old earth,  
Before ear heard or ever voice could frame  
Speech, or the human dearness of a name,  
To glorify man's longing or his mirth,  
Ere ever any place was historied  
For hearts that sever yet their own home keep,  
That sound comes immemorial like sleep  
Fresh, with the morning in dark softness hid.

## AUGURIES

O Love, O Love, were we not there, we too,  
In far nights and wild silences? Were we  
Not part of this old secret of the sea?  
For O your kiss, thrilling my body through,  
Touches me from eternity, as if I  
And you were of the things before Time came  
To measure men's desire and loss and shame,  
And no use disenchant this mystery.

## THE PORCH OF STARS

As in a porch of stars we stand ; the night  
Throbs through us, O Love, with its worlds of light,  
And mingles us in glory of one breath,  
One infinite ignorance of Time and Death.  
Behold, I am dyed in thee, and thou in me ;  
We are the colours of infinity,  
We are two flames that are one flame,  
We are but Love, and have no name.  
But did we part, O Love, if we could part,  
The very blood were taken from my heart,  
Time and Death would ride the night  
Then, and ended were all light,  
The stream of stars would fall like stone  
And heaven's utmost height be darkened,  
And we be lost, like dust that's blown,  
Like a cry, where none has hearkened.

## THE PROMISE

WHAT wonder of what hope dost thou enfold,  
Whose eyes are all filled with futurity?  
What shape of more than beauty dost thou mould  
With desire's strength out of the dim to-be?

Thy bosom is the haunt of holy fears.  
Shadows are all about thee, whispering  
Deep words and glorious names from the full years;  
But like the stars in heaven thy pulses sing

Of a voice sweeter than all tones yet heard;  
Of a heart richer than the summer's store;  
Of earth awakened from old bonds and spurred  
To run a new race for her conqueror.

Thou waitest, thy thoughts glowing, like the Night;  
And in thee buds the flower, the marvel, Light.

## A MOTHER'S SONG

OVER fast-closed baby eyes  
In the garden's golden air  
Blossom-white the butterflies  
Hover, hurry, part and pair,  
Sudden shinings, flown nowhere !  
Blue, above, the unbounded skies !

Little one, O downy head,  
O fingers clasping, shaped and small,  
Laid in soft nest of thy bed,  
How the trees are Titan-tall  
Over thee that sleepest, all  
Ignorant of thy hope and dread !

O so small, and all around  
Life so vast works wonders new.  
Yet to thee is set no bound

## AUGURIES

What thou shalt desire and do,  
Find and fashion and hold true ;  
Deeps thou hast no thought can sound :

Thou art sought by powers unknown ;  
On thy trembling heart-strings play  
Airs unheard, O little one !  
Whisperings of far away,  
Music made of day and day—  
Lands of promise, all thine own !

Wide as heaven the secrecies  
Thou dost fold : ev'n now, ev'n here,  
Thou dost touch infinities,  
While o'er thee in hope, in fear,  
My white wishes, far and near,  
Hover like the butterflies.

## ONE YEAR OLD

Is it we that are wise, is it we,  
Who have bought with a price of grief  
A wisdom seldom free  
From scorn or disbelief,  
Who find this world fulfil  
An end that is not our will,  
Who toil with the light in our eyes  
Showing us scarce begun  
The things we meant to have done,  
Is it we, is it we, that are wise?

Or O, is it you, is it you,  
That have yet no language of ours,  
But whose eyes are a laughter blue  
As of light slipping under the showers,  
Whose carol, sweeter than words,  
Trills clear as an April bird's,

## AUGURIES

Or a dancing brook on the hill,—  
Blithe springs of a confidence  
That bubbles, we know not whence,  
And has no knowledge of ill?

Lo, our desires have gone  
Like ships to a future far  
And vanished in mist alone  
By no befriending star.  
But all to you is a wonder  
Fresh as the sky, whereunder  
Life moves to pledge delight;  
You need no hope to bear  
The day through the day's care;  
Your joys are all in sight.

You want not a word to tell  
What lies beyond our guess  
And springs like a sparkling well  
In a lovely speechlessness.  
And we that have shaped with art  
Language of mind and of mart,



## AUGURIES

We have never yet found speech  
For the heart's blood deepest stirred :  
Something is flown with a word  
Or is buried beneath our reach.

Our speech is spun from the pain  
Of thought and heavy with years,  
And dyed with an ancient stain  
From passion and blood and tears.  
But O, I vow, when I hear  
Your wordless carol clear,  
I would cast this speech that endures  
As a sorry old patchwork coat,  
Could I but re-fill my throat  
With the liquid joy in yours.

## BECAUSE THOU ART NEAREST

BECAUSE thou art nearest  
To the mystery of the fire  
That is Earth's and the soul's  
And the body's desire,  
Whereof we were made  
As a song out of sound,  
Trembling together  
And together enwound,  
O frailer, more fading  
The hope and the lure  
That are not where thou art :—  
They fade nor endure,  
But in thee is the secret,  
The star, and the fire,  
Ever nearer and dearer,  
My joy, my desire.

## SEVEN YEARS

SEVEN years have flown like seven days,  
Like seven days of shining weather,  
Since we, forsaking single ways,  
Trod earth and faced the skies together.  
The old is new, the new is old,  
And who shall reckon, one or seven,  
The years that Time has never told?  
He numbers not the days of Heaven.

## SORROW

Woe to him that has not known the woe of man,  
Who has not felt within him burning all the want  
Of desolated bosoms, since the world began ;  
Felt, as his own, the burden of the fears that daunt ;  
Who has not eaten failure's bitter bread, and been  
Among those ghosts of hope that haunt the day, unseen.

Only when we are hurt with all the hurt untold,—  
In us the thirst, the hunger, and ours the helpless hands,  
The palsied effort vain, the darkness and the cold,—  
Then, only then, the Spirit knows and understands,  
And finds in every sigh breathed out beneath the sun  
The human heart that makes us infinitely one.

## E. H. P.: IN MEMORY

HOME from the wounds of Earth and wasting Time  
The marvel of her beauty and morning prime  
She has taken glorious with the dew of youth  
Still on her thoughts, those thoughts that from her eyes  
Gleamed still or splendid, unafraid of truth ;  
All her white passion, all the secrecies  
Of wild, sweet fire that her heart guarded, all  
Her heart's young rose, ere yet one leaf could fade or  
fall !

She that was made like a song nobly wrought  
In fine, fair mould of movement, speech and thought,  
With glory of hair about the buoyant head ;—  
In breaking voices we her beauty tell :  
But she is radiant, she is perfected,  
Where our long hopes far from our sorrows dwell,  
A song unended, but a song so sweet,  
No tongue of mortal dares its melody complete.



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